

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES.

MARCH 19, 1858.—Ordered to be printed.

Mr. IVERSON made the following

REPORT.

[To accompany Bill S. 209.]

The Committee on Claims, to whom was referred the petition and papers of Joseph C. G. Kennedy, report :

This claim is for indemnity for certain damages done to a building while in the occupancy of the United States, under a lease from the claimant, for the use of the Census Office. By agreement between the proprietor and the Secretary of the Interior, the rent was fixed by John W. Maury, late mayor of Washington, and W. A. Bradley, esq., late postmaster, at \$1,750 per annum. The testimony of several witnesses is adduced to show the condition of the building when it was surrendered by the government. Mr. J. S. Hollingshead, for some time chief clerk of the Census Office, deposes that, "In all alterations and fixtures for the accommodation of the immense quantity of matter in the shape of returns, &c., the preservation of the property was not considered, but the walls were perforated with nails for shelving, &c.; the paper, of the most costly character, destroyed, and this once beautiful house (for the interior was very finely finished) was left, so far as the interior was concerned, a perfect wreck." He further says that he does not believe "that less than \$2,000 would place the building in as good condition as when the government took possession of it."

John W. Forney, late clerk of the House of Representatives, deposes "that he became the proprietor of the buildings on 8th street, Washington, previously occupied by the Census Office; that the same were, when taken by him, in an untenable and damaged condition, the walls being much cracked, the papering destroyed, and the wood-work much injured, the whole requiring thorough renovation; that to render the premises tenantable and place them in a condition, such as he deemed necessary for the comfort of his family, he expended over \$3,000."

Mr. Edmondson, a practical builder, states that it could not have been restored to the condition it was in before the occupancy, for less than \$2,000, and Mr. Wood states it at \$1,800, or more, and thinks a rent of two months should be allowed to cover the time of repairs.

The contract between the government and the proprietor, as stated in the letter of the Hon. A. H. H. Stuart, Secretary of the Interior, to the Hon. H. A. Edmonson, stipulates, amongst other things, "that for any injury done to the house, beyond the ordinary wear and tear, compensation shall be made, by restoring it to the condition in which it was at the commencement of the lease."

From all the testimony in the case, the committee are of opinion that the sum of two thousand dollars ought to be allowed, and they report a bill accordingly.